



WESTMINSTER TRAFFIC COMMISSION

Minutes of the Regular Meeting

City Council Chambers, 8200 Westminster Blvd.
Tuesday - November 30, 2010

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Westminster Traffic Commission was called to order by Chairman Hamade on Tuesday, November 30, 2010, at 6:10 p.m. at the City Council Chambers, 8200 Westminster Boulevard, Westminster, California.

SALUTE TO FLAG

Chairman Hamade led the members of the audience in the Salute to the Flag.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Hamade, Nguyen, Fisher, and Cruz.

Commissioners Absent: Robbins.

Staff Present: Adolfo Ozaeta, Civil Engineering Associate; Sergeant Tom Finley, Westminster Police Department; and Veronica Johnson, Secretary.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the Traffic Commission's regular meeting of October 26, 2010 were approved by Vice Chairman Fisher, seconded by Chairman Hamade with Commissioner Nguyen abstaining (2-0). Motion died due to a lack of majority.

ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED

The first item to be considered at this evening's meeting was T.C. 77-142, Request for on-street disabled parking at 6822 Homer Street.

T.C. 77-142 6822 Homer Street

Mr. Ozaeta explained that staff had received a written request from Ms. Helen Minson, who resides at 6822 Homer Street, for one disabled parking space in front of her residence. She possesses a disabled placard, #321425, issued by the state of California.

Staff provided three exhibits; two aerial photographs and the City's on-street disabled parking policy in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Focus was directed to the positioning of the 20 foot blue curb accompanied by a standard international ADA sign. Staff clarified that an ADA parking space is not exclusive for the resident at 6822 Homer Street, but rather anyone who can legally park there. Staff inspected and assessed the area according to the criteria adopted by the Council.

STAFF'S

RECOMMENDATION

Staff's recommendation was for the Commission to deny the request for on-street disabled parking at 6822 Homer Street as their observation found parking suitable in the driveway.

Jerry Minson, 5462 Acacia Avenue, Garden Grove, spoke in favor of the proposed disabled parking restrictions. His concern is with his mother's safety because it is difficult for her to exit the driveway with large vehicles parked in the area. Family members who grew up in the home are aware of the hazard and have encountered accidents exiting the driveway due to the S shape of the curb.

Joyce Minson, 9622 Shannon Avenue, Garden Grove, spoke in favor of the proposed disabled parking restrictions. It is difficult for her mother to pull out of her driveway to run simple errands. The neighborhood has tried to initiate permit parking, stop signs, and speed bumps, but their requests have been denied by the City. She explained that the Village Green Apartments nearby charge their residents to park on their lot and as a result, those residents are taking up the free available spaces in the residential area.

Commissioner Cruz questioned the distance vehicles park from the driveway in the street. Mr. Minson explained the police have been called out frequently to ticket vehicles for parking too close to the driveway.

Commissioner Nguyen asked for more detail on the street. Mr. Ozaeta explained staff's observations found a parking problem which is part of the hesitation to eliminate the supply of parking or designate one space disabled parking. They would like to accommodate the neighborhood.

Mr. Ozaeta questioned the parking fees for the apartments and Mr. Minson explained they do not have to pay for parking; however, people have to pay for garages and second cars.

Mr. Ozaeta will coordinate with Code Enforcement Management to visit the apartment area to ensure that parking areas are being used for the parking of vehicles and not storage of any kind.

Vice Chairman Fisher agreed that staff should work with Code Enforcement. There is not enough parking in the

community and in her opinion, it is more dangerous to park on the street.

Commissioner Cruz asked if there could be a 3-5 feet variance and red curb installed along the curb of her driveway. Mr. Ozaeta explained they do not install anything less than five feet due to the maintenance. Additionally, other residents would request the same markings.

Sergeant Finley elaborated on the significant overflow from the apartment complex and how vehicles parked up against driveway exits make it difficult to see. The area is regularly enforced.

Mr. Ozaeta questioned the residents present if the apartment complex parking spaces are being properly utilized. Mr. Minson stated he cannot imagine so, there are so many people there and the complex has been there for 40 years. Ms. Minson stated the garages are either used for storage or living.

Mr. Ozaeta gave details on a similar area. Residents on La Pat Street notified staff that parking was not available on the street. This resulted in Code Enforcement officers inspecting the area and issuing letters to property owners for the proper use of parking spaces. The neighborhood felt the outcome was positive.

Vice Chairman Fisher questioned if the main problem was traffic parking issues or people not being able to access their home. Mr. Ozaeta clarified the policy is written for residents to have direct accessibility to their home and gave details on the ADA criteria.

Mr. Minson stated a resident on Homer Street has an ADA parking space in front of their home and questioned how their criteria might be different from this one. Mr. Ozaeta explained that in the past, ADA markings were handed out more freely, the Commission can overturn staff's recommendation, depending on the body of the Council and these items do return to the Committee after two years.

Chairman Hamade understands the safety issue; on the other hand, this is a big driveway.

MOTION

Vice Chairman Fisher moved to approve staff's recommendation to deny the request under the

circumstances of unmet qualifications and inspect the parking at the apartment complex; motion died due to lack of a second.

Vice Chairman Fisher motioned to request Code Enforcement to address the parking situation at the apartment complex and revisit the item in three months, seconded by Chairman Hamade.

VOTE

The motion was carried by a 4-0 vote.

Ms. Johnson explained to the audience that staff will reevaluate the situation; notification letters will be sent to residents within three months time and residents are welcome to come back and address the Commission.

T.C. 10-107

15060 Goldenwest

The second item for discussion was T.C. 10-107, Request to install "Keep Clear" pavement markings at 15060 Goldenwest Street.

Mr. Ozaeta explained staff received a written request from Amanda Alcala for installation of "Keep Clear" markings at subject location. Ms. Alcala was concerned with the frequent back up of vehicles northbound on Goldenwest Street due to the traffic signal at Bolsa Avenue. Attention was directed to Exhibit A to focus on the subject location.

Mr. Ozaeta briefed the Commission on the five criteria needed to be met in order for "Keep Clear" pavement markings to be considered. Staff's assessment found that three of the five criteria were not met. A safer alternative would be to utilize the left turn pocket on Georgetown and the signalized left turn arrow at the intersection of Georgetown and Oxford. Studies prepared by staff and the federal highway administration, where they eliminated turn maneuvers at uncontrolled locations, found that it is safer to turn at a traffic signal versus turning into a driveway that is uncontrolled. Three lane arterials tend to back up at different rates. Typically the number 1 and 2 lanes back up before the third lane does due to it being a gutter lane. This can lead to broadside collisions and this location has not had one reported since 2005.

STAFF'S

RECOMMENDATION

Staff's Recommendation was for the Commission to deny the request for "Keep Clear" pavement markings at 15060 Goldenwest Street.

Amanda Alcala, 15060 Goldenwest Street, spoke in favor of subject pavement markings. She stated the third lane is

the worst due to it being the lane that accesses the 405 southbound freeway. Her business has been located at the subject location for the past three years and traffic is pretty bad, especially the back up from the mall during the holiday season. It is inconvenient for people to quickly get in and out of the shopping center, as they do not want to drive to the signalized area, they would rather make a quick left.

David and Carla Archer, 15066 Goldenwest Street, spoke in favor of subject pavement markings. Mr. Archer informed the Commission that the exhibits do not illustrate all of the right turn lanes designated north and south bound on Goldenwest Street. Northbound Goldenwest, east of Bolsa, is the only area that does not have a dedicated right turn lane, thus, leading to the backup of traffic. The impact of traffic creates tempers and it only takes one bad accident. He understands the criteria has not been met but believes the City should take proactive actions before something tragic happens. Customers do not want to wait in the traffic, which is hurting their businesses.

Eduardo Martinez, 8732 Bishop Avenue, works at El Torito and spoke in favor of subject pavement markings. People want to make a U-Turn at this location and the sign has been removed or knocked down, which hurts the businesses. Further down, is a "Keep Clear" marking that nobody respects.

Mr. Ozaeta received six messages in favor of parking restrictions; five employees from El Torito and one from a resident.

Chairman Hamade questioned how often "Keep Clear" markings are enforced. Sergeant Finley explained they periodically enforce the area but it is not directly enforced.

Mr. Ozaeta informed the audience that the U-Turn sign can be administratively replaced as early as next week.

Chairman Hamade sees the issue because the right lane is the entrance to the 405 southbound freeway and the left lane is used to enter the businesses; if the light is red, there is a delay. A "Keep Clear" marking would help and should be enforced.

Vice Chairman Fisher questioned if there were specific measurements for a "Keep Clear" area. Mr. Ozaeta

explained there could be multiple markings depending on the area and staff will have to conduct more research.

Commissioner Cruz stated there may be a higher chance for someone to get hit in the third lane. Mr. Ozaeta explained there is always a risk.

Vice Chairman Fisher questioned if the markings were placed, what would happen to the back up of traffic from the signalized light prior to the markings. Mr. Ozaeta explained that traffic is already backing up into Georgetown and will probably be more impacted. Markings would need to be placed in order to enforce the driveway. Vehicles tend to stack up more here at the entrance of the City due to the traffic coordination.

Chairman Hamade questioned if this was the only entrance to El Torito. Mr. Ozaeta explained this is the only direct left turn lane into the restaurant.

MOTION

Chairman Hamade moved in opposition of staff's recommendation; to install the "Keep Clear" markings for safety, to help the business owners and for the replacement of the no U-Turn sign, seconded by Commissioner Cruz.

VOTE

The motion was carried by a 3-1 vote, with Vice Chairman Fisher opposing.

Ms. Johnson explained the item will be presented to the Mayor and City Council at the upcoming meeting in January for final approval. It is recommended for all in favor to attend the meeting as others in opposition could influence the overturning of the Commission's recommendation. Once approved, "Keep Clear" markings and posting of the U-Turn sign will be implemented.

NEW BUSINESS

The minutes of the Traffic Commission's regular meeting of October 26, 2010 were approved by Vice Chairman Fisher, seconded by Chairman Hamade (4-0).

OLD BUSINESS

There were no "Old Business" items presented to the Commission at tonight's meeting.

INFORMATION & REPORTS

ORAL

COMMUNICATIONS

There were no "Oral Communications" items presented to the Commission at tonight's meeting.

**WRITTEN
COMMUNICATIONS**

There were no "Written Communications" items presented to the Commission at tonight's meeting.

**ITEMS
COMMISSIONERS
MAY WISH TO
DISCUSS**

There were no "Items Commissioners may wish to Discuss" items presented to the Commission at tonight's meeting.

**ITEMS STAFF MAY
WISH TO DISCUSS**

Sergeant Finley provided an overview under the Chief's direction to focus on school drop off zones. They will be reevaluating how to address various violations of buses, crosswalks, etc. They will work with Traffic Engineering and the School Districts to alleviate the problems.

Mr. Ozaeta informed they will be visiting every school in the City to identify and implement uniform markings and signage.

Mr. Ozaeta received a request from a retired Westminster Captain that there is constant left turn back up of traffic at the intersection of Bolsa and Newland. Staff assessed the conditions and found room to expand a left turn pocket. Staff will implement this administratively.

Ms. Johnson invited the Commission to tour the Traffic Management Center after the Holiday reception.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marwan Youssef
Public Works Director/City Engineer


By: Veronica Johnson
Secretary